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August 6, 2001

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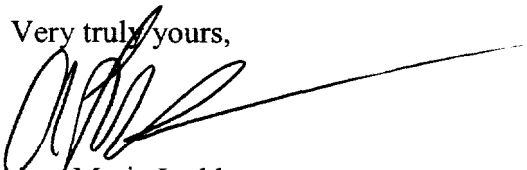
Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
TW-A235
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Petition for Waiver of the Benchmark Settlement Rates for Guyana
FCC IB Docket No. 96-261

Dear Ms. Salas:

Enclosed for filing please find the original and four copies of the Motion of Caribbean Wireless Telecom, LLC. for an extension of time to file comments to the above referenced Petition. Please contact the undersigned with any questions about this filing, together with the Unsworn Certificate of Service.

Very truly yours,



Ann Marie Ladd

AML/NJH/mkh
Enclosures

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**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

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In the Matter of)

International Settlement Rates)

Petition of Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc.)
for Waiver of the Benchmark Settlement)
Rate for Guyana)
_____)

IB Docket No. 96-261

To: The Commission

**MOTION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME TO FILE COMMENTS
AND REPLY COMMENTS**

Caribbean Wireless Telecom, LLC, ("Movant"), a U.S. company registered to do business in Guyana, is licensed by the government of Guyana as a national carrier of cellular services. Movant is also authorized as an Internet Service Provider ("ISP"). Movant hereby moves to extend the time for filing comments and reply comments in the above-captioned proceeding pursuant to Commission Rule 1.46. 47 C.F.R. § 1.46. On July 17, 2001, the Commission released its Public Notice regarding the petition of Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc. ("ATN"), for waiver of the Commission's benchmark settlement rate of \$0.23 for services on the U.S.-Guyana route.¹ ATN is the majority owner of Guyana Telephone & Telegraph Ltd ("GT&T"), the incumbent telecommunication service provider in Guyana. The comment and reply comment deadlines are currently scheduled for August 14 and August 21, respectively. For reasons set forth below, Movant requests an extension of sixty (60) days for both comments and reply comments.

Good cause exists for an extension of time. Another interested party, i-Net, will also be submitting comments, and additional parties, including Caribbean Telecommunications, Ltd., will submit comments if additional time is granted by the Commission.

¹ International Settlement Rates, *Report and Order*, 12 FCC Rcd. 19806 (1997) (hereinafter "Benchmark Order").

In its petition, ATN asserts numerous factual and statistical claims that Movant disputes, including the following: (1) that GT&T has efficiently used international settlement rates in the development of the Guyanese telecommunications network; (2) that GT&T's stated commitment of applying settlement rates to network expansion and universal service over many years has been unique from the record in other countries; (3) that GT&T needs to continue receiving higher rates from U.S. carriers in order to continue to be able to fund network expansion and infrastructure development; (4) that GT&T's pricing of telecommunications services has fairly reflected the costs of providing these services; (5) that a waiver will create opportunities for U.S. communications and information technology industries and U.S. consumers; and (6) that a reduction in the settlement rate will endanger future progress in network expansion. Based on these assertions, ATN requests an unprecedented waiver of relief for five years or until Guyana's teledensity reaches 23, whichever is sooner.²

Movant contests these claims and requires a minimum of sixty (60) days to research and prepare its comments to the Commission. Movant needs additional time to develop its comments and produce contrary evidence on, among other things, the efficiency with which settlement rates paid by U.S. carriers have been applied to infrastructure development in Guyana, and the effects this has had on U.S. carriers, U.S. consumers, and potential competitors in the field of telecommunications and internet service in Guyana. This will require research which will include reviewing documentation spanning more than a decade of telecommunications infrastructure development in Guyana. Furthermore, many of these documents are currently stored at the Guyana PUC, to which access is difficult and where record-copying facilities are

² The Commission has not granted waivers of relief on rates in any prior cases regarding international rates.

limited.³ Due to these difficulties, Movant requires a minimum of sixty (60) days to fully research and formulate its comments to the Commission.

ATN argues that a waiver will not undermine the policy of the Benchmark Settlement if it is “targeted” to a low income or developing nation where the dominant carrier has demonstrated that it currently uses, and will continue to use, settlement revenues to fund network expansion and to make infrastructure investment. ATN submits an affidavit of its Chairman, Cornelius Prior, Jr., alleging that GT&T has used settlement revenues in this manner. Movant disputes this claim and needs adequate time to review the record of GT&T’s investment in the telecommunications network and infrastructure in Guyana. The Commission should allow interested parties, such as Movant, appropriate time in which to review public records in Guyana, and the public filings of ATN, GT&T’s parent, on this issue to determine whether the facts underlying ATN’s request are accurate. If ATN’s factual allegations are not supported, its argument for the potential benefits of waiving the Benchmark Settlement rates will also fail.

Granting a waiver will undermine the policies served by the Benchmark Order, as well as the interests of U.S. carriers and consumers. In the Benchmark Order, the Commission points out that the current benchmark rates are significantly above cost, allowing carriers such as GT&T to receive significantly high margins. The Commission comments that, “the significant margins on international termination fees that now prevail cause U.S. consumers to pay artificially high prices for international services and discourage foreign carriers from introducing effective competition and cost-based pricing for all telecommunications services.”⁴ Movant asserts that, contrary to the Commission’s policy goals of lowering costs and fostering

³ Because Guyana is a developing country which faces weaknesses in its infrastructure and lacks many facilities, Movant will face numerous obstacles in completing its research. For example, the Guyana PUC does not generally make documents available to the public. Furthermore, there is currently only one photocopier located at the Guyana PUC and its availability is often uncertain due to frequent power outages.

⁴ Benchmark Order, at ¶ 2.

“technologically innovative interconnectivity serving all the world's consumers,”⁵ the effects of a waiver of the benchmark settlement rate for Guyana primarily will benefit GT&T at the expense of the interests of U.S. consumers, U.S. carriers, the Guyanese population at large and potential competitors attempting to enter the market.

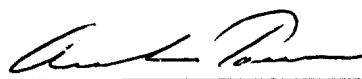
An extension also is appropriate because portions of ATN’s petition are not, as of August 6, 2001, yet available on the Commission’s public website. Specifically, Appendix A, which apparently is intended to provide some factual premises to ATN’s arguments, is, to date, unavailable to the public on the Commissions’ website. Without a complete copy of ATN’s petition, it is difficult for Movant and other interested parties to address ATN’s claims fully. Once the complete petition becomes available, interested parties will be able to more fully understand and further research ATN’s claims and prepare their respective comments.

Moreover, no prejudice will result from this extension, as the lower benchmark settlement rates are not scheduled to take effect on the U.S.-Guyana route until January 1, 2002. Movant’s requested sixty (60) day extension of the comment and reply comment deadlines will not delay the Commission’s resolution of the issues in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

CARIBBEAN WIRELESS TELECOM, LLC

August 6, 2001

By: 
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⁵ *Id.* at ¶ 1.

**Before the
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)
_____)

UNSWORN CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Jill Beckman Ray, state under penalty of perjury, that on August 6, 2001, I caused to be delivered via Federal Express copies of the Motion of Caribbean Wireless Telecom, LLC for an extension of time to file comments in the above-referenced matter on the following parties:

Robert J. Aamoth
Kelly, Drye & Warren LLP
1200 – 19th Ave. NW
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Public Affairs Reference
and Information Center
CY-A257
Portals 2 Bldg.
445 – 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

International Transcription Service, Inc.
1231 – 20th Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc.
19 Estate Thomas
Havensight, St. Thomas
Virgin Islands, 00802

Dated: August 6, 2001



Jill Beckman Ray

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Ann Marie Ladd

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ENCLOSURE
